THE

THESPIAN MONITOR,

AND

DRAMATICK MISCELLANY.

BY BARNABY BANGBAR, ESQ.

Careless of censure—nor too fond of fame,
Still pleas'd to praise—yet not afraid to blame,
Averse, alike, to flatter or offend. POPE.

Vol. I.....SATURDAY, Dec. 9, 1809.....No. III.

NEW-THEATRE.

FRIDAY, Dec. 1st.

ABAELLINO,
THE GREAT BANDIT.

Wm. Dunlap, Esq.

Andreas Gritti,	Mr. Warren.
Dandoli,	Mr. Briers.
Canari,	Mr. M'Kenzie.
Flodoardo,	Mr. Wood.
Cardinal Grimaldi,	Mr. Downie.
Parozzi,	Mr. Cone.
Falieri,	Master Barret.
Contarino,	Mr. Miller.
Memmo,	Mr. Blissett.
Matheo,	Mr. Cross.
Abaellino,	Mr. Wood.
Rosamonda,	Mrs. Wood.
Iduella,	Mrs. Francis.

The subject of this Tragedy, was originally a German tale, known under the title of *Abællino*,

der Grosse Rauber, and afterwards converted into a Drama. The celebrated authour of the "Romantick Tales," and the "Monk," M. G. Lewis, translated the tale into an English Novel; and Mr. Dunlap, formerly manager of the New-York theatre, adapted the drama to the American stage in the manner in which it is now represented. Both the tale and drama, as they stand in the original language, are spirited and interesting; excite the attention of almost every reader; and have often received the approbation of many literary characters, familiar with the German. The translations, as is frequently the case, are destitute of the same force, and have lost much of the purity of the originals. The Novel, by Lewis, is free; the Drama, by Dunlap, is literal. The former has exhibited a better acquaintance with his subject, the latter a less extensive knowledge of the idiom, than his competitor. The language of the Novel, is interesting, chaste, and animated; that of the Drama is tame, sometimes unintelligible, and frequently degenerates into poverty. The principal scenes are blended with too much mystery, and have not sufficient connexion; and the interviews between *Flodoardo* and *Rosamonda*, approach so near to a childish simplicity, that they excite sensations bordering on disgust.

Andreas Gritti, the old Doge of Venice; and his council, *Dandoli* and *Canari*, were the objects of very general reverence and respect.

Cardinal Grimaldi, *Parozzi*, *Contarino*, and *Memmo*, the gentlemen of the conspiracy, were indifferently well executed.

With *Falieri* we were much dissatisfied.—— We think Master Barret's powers hardly adequate to the line of acting in which he appears.

Flodoardo received all the promptness, soft persuasion, and dignified deportment which it could require. We cannot say so much for *Abaellino;* we have never seen an actor who could succeed in both parts of this character, but many who were great in one or the other. Mr. Wood excels in *Flodoardo*, and whilst he may be said to be the best *Flodoardo*, Mr. Green must be called *the Great Bandit*.

Rosamonda's habiliments were the most splendid of any which have made their appearance this season.

LADY OF THE ROCK.

Thomas Holcroft.

Lord M'Lean,	Mr. Cone.
Dugald,	Mr. Downie.
Campbell,	Mr. M'Kenzie.
Argyle,	Mr. Jacobs.
Fisherman,	Mr. Jefferson.
Lady M'Lean,	Mrs. Wilmot.
Child,	Miss Jefferson.
Moggy,	Mrs. Seymour.

The Lady of the Rock, is one among the recent productions of Holcroft; and much as any other may have added to the lustre of his name, this must, certainly, have tarnished it. The last scene but one, which represents Lady M'Lean upon a rock, and from which the piece derives

its name, is the only one which entitles it to a representation. The principal beauty even of that scene, depends very much upon the painter's fancy; so that if exertion was not made to set it forth to advantage, the authour's dramatick reputation would severely suffer. The more dangerous and dreadful the Lady's situation can be rendered, the more interest must necessarily be excited; and where interest is felt at all, admiration often follows. Thus, we continually hear the loudest plaudits bestowed upon a worthless drama, because the design of a single scene may have received an extraordinary degree of attention from the stage manager: and an operatick melo-drama, so destitute of propriety, so unconnected with the required consistency, and so overloaded with palpable plagiary, as is the "Lady of the Rock," repeatedly rescued from the gripe of hated obscurity. "So young, and yet so cunning," reminds us of King Richard's words to little York. "So young, and yet so cunning! they say, they never live long!" The musick of this piece belongs exclusively to Holcroft's daughter, and may have sanctioned the father in producing such a ridiculous and offensive medley, as a vehicle upon which to bring her into fame. The *Piebrach*, in assembling the clans, assisted in preventing the banishment of peurile dialogue. The Scotch bagpipe excited the wonder and surprise of the whole audience. The dress of Caledonia is always characterized upon the stage; it never should be mistaken. Improper costume betrays a want of knowledge in the actor, and degrades the character. The introduction of so many children, adds not to the

force of the dialogue, nor the spirit of a tale of horror.

Lord M'Lean looked frowningly enough; a "countenance more in anger than in sorrow." The attention to a Scottish Laird's habiliment was more than Mr. Cone has hitherto discovered. We have seen him in a plaided frock, with no addition of a Kelt.

Mr. Downie's *Dugald* was as respectable as he could make it. Nature has planted in him a defect, which all his art can never remove; his want of force and failure to delight, we must attribute, not to Mr. Downie, but to his misfortune.

M'Kenzie's *Campbell*, and the *Fisherman* of Jefferson, were received with considerable applause, which they both deserved.

Argyle was stiff, and awkwardly "*enacted.*" With such a cousin, *M'Lean* need not to have been jealous.

Lady M'Lean, and her little daughter, were truly interesting. Mrs. Wilmot's performances are never otherways. Miss Jefferson's manner, and her features, are both very pretty.

Saturday, December 2nd.

ROAD TO RUIN.

T. Holcroft.

Dornton,	Mr M'Kenzie.
Mr Sulky,	Mr. Francis.
Mr. Silky,	Mr. Blissett.
Harry Dornton,	Mr. Wood.
Milford,	Mr. Cone.
Goldfinch,	Mr. Jefferson.
Widow Warren,	Mrs. Francis.
Sophia,	Mrs. Wood.

Road to Ruin was performed the first time for

several years. *Dornton* in the hands of M'Kenzie, can never be behind the spirit and conception, which the authour meant it to have received.

Mr. Sulky was sufficiently in nature, like his name. We could never have been persuaded of his good disposition, had he not himself assured us of it, for he "does not look so." Mr. Silky, his detestable opponent, was as appropriately named, though he's "a silken, sly, insinuating *Jack.*"

Harry Dornton, the dissolute, the gay, the volatile, the fashionable *Dornton* was himself, indeed. The ease and elegance which is attached to this character, are never diminished when in the possession of Mr. Wood. His laudable determination to free his father, and the house of *Dornton and Co.* from that embarrassment which his madness and folly had occasioned, leads him into several disagreeable situations, admirably calculated to set forth the actor's talent, and from which he extricates himself with wonderful facility. Although his promise of marriage is already pledged of *Sophia*, yet to relieve the banking house, he resolves upon wedding the *widow Warren.* From her he obtains six thousand pounds, in the possession of which he repairs to the prison where *Milford* is confined for debts, part of which are due to *Harry's* father. Here unknown to *Milford*, he generously sets him free, and calls him out to combat, for having traduced his father's name. These are situations which set forth the character of young *Dornton*, and finely exhibit the powers of the actor.

Milford's acting was not the most admirable we have ever seen, nor was his dress so neat and fashionable as his companion *Dornton's*. Mr. Cone occasionally devotes some attention to his dress, but is at times too indolent.

Goldfinch, was "quite the sort." Mr. Jefferson gave it much fire, animation, force, and spirit. His uncouth address to the *Widow*, his attention to the demands of her maid, his method of obtaining her, and defeating *Harry Dornton*, and his preservation of the Jockey dialect, were executed with propriety; but his repetition of "that's your sort," did not quite fulfil the intention of the authour.

Mrs. Francis, as the *Widow Warren*, was inimitably fine. We could not but admire every scene. The audience paid her the tribute she deserved, and loud applause continually met her ear. She created an infinite degree of mirth.

Mrs. Wood, who personated *Sophia*, was not in her proper line of acting, at least she was not in one of those parts where her talent shines so conspicuously. This character is too comick, and too playful for the graceful movement of Mrs. Wood.

DON JUAN;

Or, the Libertine Destroyed.

Don Juan,	Mr. M'Kenzie.
Scaramouch,	Mr. Jefferson.

Pantomimes, with an American audience, are seldom productive either of delight, of pleasure,

or of admiration. The gallery is sometimes to be amused, and pantomimes are there applauded. But when it requires all the skill, exertion, and ability of *Don Juan* and *Scaramouch* to preserve the whole piece from censure, no part of the audience can be satisfied. The new method of destroying *Don Juan*, we do not so much admire, as the former. The failure however of the new destruction, which left us but to suspect the manner they intended, rendered the conclusion tame, unsatisfactory, and improper.

Monday, Dec. 4th.

SPEED THE PLOUGH.

Thomas Morton, Esq.

Sir Philip Blandford,	Mr. M'Kenzie.
Sir Abel Handy.	Mr. W[illegible]ren.
Bob Handy,	Mr. Wood.
Henry,	Mr. Cone.
Farmer Ashfield,	Mr. Jefferson.
Morrington,	Mr. Cross.
Miss Blandford,	Mrs. Wilmot.
Lady Handy,	Mrs. Morris.
Dame Ashfield,	Mrs. Francis.
Susan Ashfield,	Mrs. Wood.

To mention the authour's name, of this comedy, were of itself sufficient to convey an idea of its value. But the merits of "Speed the Plough" have long since been published, and are too generally known to need any remark. *Sir Philip Bland-*

ford has hitherto been personated by Mr. Wood, but as a misfortune occured in the family of Mr. Downie, to whom the character of *Bob Handy* belongs, Mr. Wood was obliged to give up *Sir Philip's* company, for honest *Bob's*. The change however was welcomed by the audience, who would rather at any time see Mr. Wood's *Handy*, than his *Blandford*. *Sir Philip* met with a less able representative.

Sir Abel Handy, was blusteringly humourous, and highly entertaining. His skill and ingenuity, his inventive fancy, and his continual failure in his experiments, were incidents creative of every symptom of mirth; and his unfortunate subjection to his wife, rendered not less the subject of ridicule.

Mr. Cone's *Henry*, was interesting and distinctly uttered. An easy manner of speaking is Mr. Cone's characteristick.

Farmer Ashfield, is one of those characters which in their dialect are similar, and in their general features approach very near, to *Frank Oatland*, of the same authour. The strictest integrity and unimpeachable honesty and honour, prevail in all his actions, and the consequent difficulty of representation, excite the unceasing applause which has ever attended the successful effort of every actor. Mr. Jefferson's fame is already established. "The argufying of the topick," the repulsive answer given to *Sir Philip* after it, the rejoicing upon *Henry's* success at the ploughing match, the most admirable scene of the rejection of *Dame Ashfield's* temptation to read their daughter's letter, and several others, reflect the greatest credit upon *Farmer Ashfield*.

The phrase "I will believe my child" was followed with every mark of gratification by the audience. This is a most exquisite treat for every auditor of sensibility.

Mr. Cross's *Morrington* was respectable. The part was perfect in his memory, and his dialogue judiciously spoken. We are happy to perceive Mr. Cross's determination to merit some applause. If he falls not again into inattention, he shall receive as much as we ought to bestow.

Miss Blandford, was the object of general approbation: she ever has been so. Morton's characters are generally the representatives of the "better part of mankind." Mrs. Wilmot never suffers the authour to lose any thing in her representations.

Dame Ashfield's lace making with *Bob Handy*, was humourous in the extreme. Her disturbance of *Susan's* trunk, quite irksome to her husband, and her antipathy to *Mrs. Grundy*, very natural. Mrs. Francis can hardly be excelled in such characters as the *Dame;* and when in them, excites the highest glee and good humour. "What would *Mrs. Grundy* say" were she to see her represent *Dame Ashfield?*

Susan Ashfield is one of those parts which, when speaking of Mrs. Wood in *Jesse Oatland*, we ought to have enumerated. She imperceptibly seizes upon our attention, and leaves us to regret her absence at the closing of the play.

Lady Handy, was supported with perfect propriety by Mrs. Morris. The audience who witnessed her exertion, bestowed on her the deserved tribute of applause.

ELLA ROSENBERG.

James Kenney.

The characters of this piece were enumerated and arranged, in our last number, when we revealed the plot, and promised to speak of the performance another time.

The same occurrence which produced the change of parts in the play, brought out Master Barrett in the character of *Colonel Mountfort* in this Melo Drama.

The Elector has not much business upon the stage, and cannot consequently be a very conspicuous character.

Col. Mountfort's villanies we have already detailed. Of his representative Mr. Downie, we have not yet been able to speak. Whilst we now embrace the chance, we are enabled to mention two different attempts. Mr. Downie's figure, voice and age, were better calculated for *Col. Mountfort*, and gave us more "assurance of a man" than master Barrett's, who again was scarcely audible.

Rosenberg is not a tedious part, the language not superfluous, nor the acting injudicious. Mr. Cone's performance created a deal of pleasure.

Storm, that gallant hero whom we spoke of, the generous and brave protector of *Ella*, was represented with becoming justice, and with every degree of propriety. The action of M'Kenzie was happily appropriated to the character of *Storm*.

Flutterman is a character too much like *Willikind* in the "Wood Demon." The practice of

blundering speech making is now becoming too much hackneyed. *Mr. Flutterman* is the landlord of the Grenadier, a gentleman who fancies himself the only man of learning in the neighbourhood, and extremely certain of receiving some high place of great emolument for the address which he delivered to the *Elector*, upon his having acquired a victory over his enemy. His reply to his wife's rebuke, upon her desiring him to continue in the post of "blockhead," and containing the following words, is not less forcible than pleasing. "So I will, wife; thank heaven that's no obstacle to preferment now a days."

Ella Rosenberg was personated by Mrs. Wood, who never could have excited greater interest. *Ella's* unhappiness renders her at length frantick, and Mrs. Wood made her phrenzy more like reality than we could ever have supposed her capable of. The sweetness of manner, and wild unknowing action which she exhibited, actually surprized many even of her admirers, well as they are acquainted with her merits. We feel the strongest sanction of assurance in saying, no woman that has ever trod this stage, could have exceeded her in *Ella*. We hope to see it again repeated.

Christiana has not yet acquired sufficient strength of voice. Her timidity renders her situation more irksome than it would naturally be, were she inspired with more courage. Mrs. Jacobs was the representative.

Mrs. Flutterman, cannot be too highly extolled.

Wednesday, Dec. 6th.

DOUGLAS;

Or, the Noble Shepherd.

John Home.

Lord Randolph,	Mr. Warren.
Young Norval,	Master Payne.
Old Norval,	Mr. M'Kenzie.
Glenalvon,	Mr. Wood.
Lady Randolph,	Mrs. Barrett.

This Tragedy written by the Rev. Dr. Home, of the Scotch Presbytery, was got up for the introduction of master Payne, of whose renown, report has been so loud. As crouded a house as we have ever witnessed, attended to see the little "Garrick." Upon his appearance he was greeted with as loud applause as ever has been heard.—His figure is very small, and not profuse in beauty; his uterance is not quite clear, his tones wanting a degree of roundness which time may yet supply them with. His voice is weak, and his words though tolerably well heard by those who are near, are not sufficiently distinct to those who are at a distance from the stage. His gesture is clothed with "manly readiness," and his movement with it over the boards, is as graceful, easy, and dignified, as that of the oldest veteran on the stage; but we think he overloads his speeches with too much emphasis and action. His first speech contained a pause, sixty seconds too long. "My name————is Norval." By such a pause we should be led to think that Norval knew his real name, and was hesitating whether he should pronounce that

under which he lived a shepherd's life, or any other.

"——Who wore *that* day"
The arms which *now* I wear.

The words in italicks should have been as emphatick, as those which master Payne made so. In English wherever an *antithesis* occurs, the words creating it should receive the emphasis, and it is a most unpardonable neglect to pass them over, in as much as it destroys the proper reading. In the lines above recited, there is what may be called a double *antithesis*. "*Who*," the warrior meaning, as opposed to *I*, speaking of himself, and "*that day*" as opposed to the present, the time of his relating the deed, which is expressed by the word "*now*." Each of these words is alike emphatick. Master Payne suffered us to hear but two, "*who and I*." These are the only faults which we could discover in the performance; let us now point out its beauties. The line, "Like Douglas conquer, or like Douglas die," was delivered with astonishing force from so young a person, and though we were somewhat disappointed at the utterance of the first dialogue, we were imperceptibly charmed by the excellence of the following ones. The attitudes of master Payne are blended with elegance and firmness. That in the first scuffle with *Glenalvon*, and the irritation which accompanied, were admirable, as was testified by the effect they produced. The entrance to his mother, and the posture in which he held each sword, after killing and disarming *Glenalvon*, were truely unexampled; and the manner in which he

struggled with expiring nature, actually inimitable. His falling upon one side, raising himself almost erect, and sinking again upon the other, is a new and beautiful manner, and was productive of every degree of delight.

From all the performances of master Payne, we hope and believe his prayer to heaven to "let him be renowned," will not be unsuccessful.

Mr. Warren's *Lord Randolph* was marked as much with benevolence, gratitude and hospitality, in its action, as it is tinctured with in its language.

We do not remember to have ever seen Mr. Wood in the character of *Glenalvon* before. But we shall be content to see him often. The deep, designing, artful *Glenalvon*, plotting against *Randolph*, and *Young Norval*, and seeking the destruction of *Lady Randolph's* honour, met with his repulses, and deserts, in as much severity as he should. Mr. Wood imparts more pleasure in romantick comedy characters.

Old Norval was personated with sufficient respectability and propriety, to gratify *us*; though Mr. M'Kenzie was not as fortunate in pleasing two gentlemen under conical hats, upon the same seat with us, whose continual tittering, and shameful annoyance to the audience, merited correction.

Lady Randolph several times surprised us: her chasteness of pronunciation, and attention to easy and appropriate action, is very deserving of commendation. "She suits the word to the action, the action to the word."

SHIPWRECK.

S. J. Arnold.

Selwyn,	Master Barrett.
Hawser,	Mr. Hardinge.
Michael Goto,	Mr. West.
Shark,	Mr. Blessitt.
Stave,	Mr. Jefferson,
Angelica,	Mrs. Wilmot.
Fanny,	Mrs. Jacobs.
Sally Shamrock,	Mrs. Seymour.

The musick, scenery, and anecdote, contained in the Shipwreck, tend to make it humourous and pretty. The songs are very happily blended with the characters and incidents, and the words which express them are highly poetical.

Selwyn's notes we presume were not in tone, else we should have heard them. *Harry Hawser's* were in the finest harmony, some of them redelivered, and sufficiently applauded. *Stave* and *Shark*, were musical enough, and *Michael Goto* in the harshest tone. *Angelica* and *Fanny*, were the virtuous protectors of the sailors' properties, and *Sally Shamrock* preserved her native dialect. The representation of the Wreck, and the surrounding scenery, were such as may properly be called beautiful. They could not possibly be more so, being designed by the painter of the "Lady of the Rock." Mr. Robbins's talents have often been eulogized. His fancy is inventive, and his skill and execution, ever admirable. His retreat from the stage, prevents the audience from offering their reward, and leaves us, as much to regret the cause, as they, the event.

BIOGRAPHY.

Mr. CAULFIELD.

The Gentleman upon whose theatrical talents the following remarks have been offered to the publick, in the "English Memoirs of the Green Room," now holds a situation in the Boston theatre. His name is perfectly familiar to every Thespian in this country, and his accomplishments and acquirements, such as they are, are well known to the inhabitants of the city in which he resides. His line of characters, is first rate Tragedy, and genteel Comedy.

Were this Gentleman but gifted with even a moderate share of steadiness and assiduity, he might maintain a respectable rank in the profession. From nature he has inherited the advantage of a good figure and a pleasing voice—nor does it appear, from the general tenour of his acting, that he is altogether devoid of sense. But he manifests such a deplorable want of thought—such an inveterate carelessness and inattention, that, without a total revolution in his system and practice, we despair of seeing him ever rise to eminence.

Mr. Caulfield was first brought into notice by his skill, as an *imitator*. He has a happy facility of hitting off, to the greatest nicety, the precise manner, tone and habits of any performer, whom he chooses to make the subject of his imitative powers. In this capacity he approved himself of eminent service to the Proprietor of the Summer

Theatre, who wrote the part of *Apewell*, in the Prelude of *New Hay at the Old Market*, with an express view to Mr. Caulfield's talents in that line; and 'tis but justice to Mr. Caulfield to add, that to his exertions the piece was in a great measure indebted for its success.

We have occasionally seen Mr. Caulfield in characters of first rate moment and importance. Thus he has performed the part of *Pizarro*, as the substitute for Mr. Barrymore; and even at times been the *locum tenens* for Mr. Kemble. But he is always in a hurry, bustles through the part with too much violence, and is seldom correct and perfect in the dialogue. This latter circumstance especially tells greatly to his discredit, as demonstrative of great culpable negligence, and proving that he does not take sufficient pains to improve in his profession. We most earnestly recommend to him to pay stricter attention to the duties of his calling, in which case he will find his diligence amply repaid by an increase of public patronage and favour.

THESPIAN INTELLIGENCE.

Died,

On Friday evening, Dec. 1st, Mrs. Downie of the Theatres Baltimore and Philadelphia. Her remains were followed to the grave on Saturday, by the principal part of the Thespian Corps.